

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON

SEP 12 2007

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

RELIGION
BEHIND THE FRONT
AND
AFTER THE WAR



MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
LONDON · BOMBAY · CALCUTTA · MADRAS
MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
NEW YORK · BOSTON · CHICAGO
DALLAS · SAN FRANCISCO

THE MACMILLAN CO. OF CANADA, LTD.
TORONTO



RELIGION
BEHIND THE FRONT
AND
AFTER THE WAR

BY
THE REV. NEVILLE S. TALBOT, M.C.

ASSISTANT CHAPLAIN-GENERAL
AUTHOR OF
'THE MIND OF THE DISCIPLES'
AND OF 'THOUGHTS ON RELIGION AT THE FRONT'

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1918

COPYRIGHT

TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND
IN GRATITUDE TO C. M. T.

P R E F A C E

THESE pages are written by one whose work has of late appointed him a place behind the line at the front. They cannot claim therefore, as perhaps could be claimed for a former little book, to have 'the smell of fire' upon them. At any rate it is only a mitigated fire. They come from the quasi-peace environment which, as front-line troops never forget, surround an Army Headquarters. They come from the security which the 'hate' of 'Fritz' can hardly or seldom disturb except by a bomb dropped at night. Hence they are

directed to the questions which will await solution when such and yet greater security is universal, and peace has been restored.

I think that the work of diagnosis of religion at the front has been sufficiently accomplished to warrant the attempt to carry the discussion of it further. If some who read these pages feel that they are 'left out of the hunt,' because they have not read the presupposed previous reports upon religion as exposed by war, I would refer them to Donald Hankey's *A Student in Arms* (1st and 2nd Series), to *Papers from Picardy* by T. W. Pym & Geoffrey Gordon, and to J. H. Gray's *As Tommy sees us*. And perhaps I may be forgiven for mentioning, *sotto voce*, my own *Thoughts on Religion at the Front*.

Before passing to the following dis-

cussion, I wish to record my conviction that the giving and receiving of thoughts and impressions by Christian men and women is a secondary matter. It is both interesting and important. There is a great need to-day of intellectual illumination. But greater still is the need of spiritual and moral power. We Christians need, primarily, the power to work out in life a witness to the reality of the Gospel of the Kingdom, which shall be the counterpart in peace to the heroisms of war.

N. S. T.

September 1918.

B. E. F.

“ Religion was once the pillar of fire which went before the human race in its great march through history, showing it the way. Now it is fast assuming the rôle of the ambulance which follows in the rear and picks up the exhausted and wounded. This too is a great work, but it is not sufficient. And when religion has disburdened herself of all her dead values, she will once more, in intimate association with ethics, rise to a power which leads men forward.”—PROFESSOR HÖFFDING.

“ Death is on all sides of him with pointed batteries, as he is on all sides of us ; unfortunate surprises gird him round ; mim-mouthed friends and relations hold up their hands in quite a little elegiacal synod about his path : and what cares he for all this ? Being a true lover of living, a fellow with something pushing and spontaneous in his inside, he must, like any other soldier, in any other stirring, deadly warfare, push on at his best pace until he touch the goal. ‘ A peerage or Westminster Abbey ! ’ cried Nelson in his bright, boyish, heroic manner. These are great incentives ; not for any of these, but for the plain satisfaction of living, of being about their business in some sort or other, do the brave, serviceable men of every nation tread down the nettle danger, and pass flyingly over all the stumbling-blocks of prudence.”—R. L. STEVENSON, “ Aes Triplex ” in *Virginibus Puerisque*.

“ There came then His brethren and His mother, and, standing without, sent unto Him, calling Him. And the multitude sat about Him, and they said unto Him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And He answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren ? And He looked round about on them which sat about Him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren ! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.”—Mark iii. 31-35.

“ For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble ; every man’s work shall be made manifest : for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire.”—1 Corinthians iii. 11-13.

I

THE GREAT TASK

THE main disclosure of these days of war is that a sound heart beats in our common humanity. The great task which lies before the champions of religion (as it does also before the apostles of patriotism, citizenship and education) is to harvest and employ the wealth of faith, courage, goodwill, comradeship and capacity to serve which the war has called out in all sorts and conditions of men. The man who does not believe more in his fellow-man as a result of being alive to-day, is in danger of blindness to the

2 RELIGION BEHIND THE FRONT

light and of sin against the Holy Ghost. This is not the verdict of blind optimism. It allows for a heavy discounting of the good in men by the evil which war has also laid bare in them. But a great balance of good remains over after the discount. What is to be made of this capital sum? It has to be spent on a common effort to make the world better. It has been deep in the heart of many men, as they have endured, that in so doing they were sharing in a travail which would bring new and better things to the birth. They have felt that they were paying the price for the future. As, therefore, each day passes, the public debt of the community to its defenders and to their folk mounts higher. The longer the war lasts the greater is the urgency that the better future, for which the price has been paid, may come to be. With the humility of indebtedness let

good men and women see to it that, so far as in them lies, the agony shall not have been endured in vain. Above all, let those who call themselves Christians do so, if there is in them a spark of faith that in Christ lies the power of a new creation, in which former things pass away and old things become new.

II

HAS RELIGION THE POWER TO LEAD MEN FORWARD ?

THE world has to be made better. But this can only be accomplished by the ordinary life and daily duties of average men being raised to a higher level and quickened by a new spirit; and if it seems apparent that this is the very task which religion sets before itself, we have to acknowledge, with a willingness to learn and an unwillingness to scold, that the mass of men do not see in religion a power to possess and inspire life's main activities. It has fallen to chaplains to struggle against a very

strongly entrenched prejudice that what they stand for is a side-show. In the struggle we have been much tempted—we have been often invited—to emulate German preachers and to equate the Gospel with so much nationalist war-munition, if only thereby we could make it bite and count. We have been forced to ask whether religion can be more than an occasional emotional indulgence, or a detached series of observances, or a faint future hope. Can it grip men when and where they are alive? Can it operate in spheres which claim and receive their industry and real interest? Can it be the main nerve of *life*?

And, to be frank, there are other questions to be considered. Can the Gospel prove its relevance to the goodness and excellence which are in men in spite of (or alongside of) the fact that they are sinners? Has it been

6 RELIGION BEHIND THE FRONT

presented overmuch as only a remedy or medicine for sin? Is there health as well as obduracy in the protest, which I recall—"As soon as I see the padre's 'dog-collar' I begin to think of my sins"?

In all this I go back to the words of the philosopher whom I have quoted on the opening page. The war has called up the passage in my memory and made it salient. "Religion was once the pillar of fire which went before the human race in its great march through history, showing it the way. Now it is fast assuming the rôle of the ambulance which follows in the rear and picks up the exhausted and wounded. This, too, is a great work, but it is not sufficient. And when religion has disburdened herself of all her dead values, she will once more, in intimate association with ethics, rise to a power which leads men forward."

As we peer back through the smoke of war to the former days of peace we feel, I think, that life lacked direction and leadership. It was wanting in an end worthy to claim allegiance and receive devotion. The peace-life of England was sprawling and little knit together. It was ravaged by the self-interest of individuals and classes. The enthusiasm and the unrelenting compulsion of war have done something to pull it together. But that constraint will some day be relaxed. What then? Will the unity, induced by a great cause and reinforced by fear, fly apart? Is there a principle of free self-determination ready to take the place of the binding necessities of war? Is it to be found, and will men find it in religion? Can religion lead them forward?

III

THE PRESENT IRRELEVANCE OF RELIGION TO LIFE

I WISH that my experience behind the line made me more confident as to an answer to these questions. It takes two to make a quarrel, and the blame no doubt falls not only on religion as presented to men but on their misunderstanding of it. But, anyhow, religion has fallen into a rut of irrelevance to life. Behind the line, its relevance to death is not greatly to the fore. All the more there, then, do some men fail to see its relevance to themselves at all. I see that many men of a high standard of

work and efficiency, when busy and amid circumstances relatively peaceful, find it easy to leave religion on one side. They are not 'made to think' by the daily perils of war, and it is certain that many of them would not yield to such pressure did war press more sharply on them. They are caught up by an absorbing routine which is comparatively normal and ordinary, and into its orbit religion does not seem to cut. Hence if they are, say, staff-officers, they commonly do not want religion—they do not want to be Christians—in order to be, or to be better, staff-officers.

This is not universally true, but it is true enough to serve as an ominous parable for my purpose. After the war, as before it, it will not only be staff-officers, but men in all walks of life who will fail to see the relevance of religion to the work which absorbs

10 RELIGION BEHIND THE FRONT

their best energies. I do not mean to disparage at all the dutiful and faithful work which men do and will do apart from the conscious impulse of religion. Nor do I forget that work occupies only a part of human interest. Yet I think that, if the world is to be better after the war, it means that the sphere of men's ordinary work and business relationships has to be changed. If so, that is the sphere which will need the impact upon it of new resources of good-will and unselfishness. There should be such resources in religion. Religion ought to be able to inspire and transform the work of the world. That is what the philosopher whom I have quoted means. Religion should have "the power to lead men forward." Will it prove to have such power? Will it be drawn upon as having such power? The one thing does not follow from the other. Supply does not neces-

sarily create demand. But granted the demand, what hinders the supply? I want to ask, and I invite others to ask, what is it in the Christian religion which accounts for the gulf between itself and the life and work of men? Of what "dead values" must it "disburden" itself, so that it may "rise once more to be a power which leads men forward" and to be a main means for bringing in a new order?

IV

THE UNCHANGING CHRIST THE RE- CONCILIATION OF THINGS NEW AND OLD

I FEEL that here, at the outset, I ought to pause in order to try to conciliate those who, in loyalty to "the faith once for all committed to the saints," are suspicious of any proposal to disburden or simplify the Christianity which has come down to us from the past. But I see that any adequate justification of the functions of "a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven," who "bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old," would overweight

a little work which is meant to be no more than a tract for the times. There are great questions in regard to the reconciliation of the new with the old, of change with continuity, of present experience with the original and unique experience of the first followers of Jesus. They cannot be ignored. I do not ignore them, though I do not go into them. I would only say that the main ground of confidence in the matter is that God did not make Himself known primarily in a book, nor in a system of thought, but in a Person—in that “which He wrought in Christ.” We have the right to claim that the Holy Spirit will lead us to know that God is now and in every age, amid changing and ever-developing circumstances, that which He was revealed to be in Christ. We have the right to claim that we may verify the identity of a person. The knowledge of a person is

14 RELIGION BEHIND THE FRONT

the one thing which change cannot affect. We know a person to be the same person though external circumstances and conditions alter. And we know this all the more richly in that, as it survives, the identity of a person becomes more sure, and is more firmly apprehended. The figure of Christ has come down to us in a certain medium. It has been enshrined and preserved in a deposit of biblical, credal, traditional, institutional material. Amid changes and disturbances in such material He—who is no dead figure but the living Lord—will be the more fully apprehended, by a knowledge continuous with the past, to be the same to-day as yesterday.

V

THE SURFACE OF TRADITIONAL CHRISTI- ANITY SEPARATES MEN FROM ITS HIDDEN TREASURE

I HAVE tried to say this, however clumsily, because my own experience of taking Orders after being a soldier, and my recent experience with men, have made me aware of the degree to which the Person, who is the core of Christianity, is hidden and disguised by the surface of Christian tradition. What God is, as made known in Christ, is as a treasure hid in the strange field of prevalent and traditional Christianity.

It is not tradition alone which has

done the hiding. Things being what they are, God is hidden. "Thou art a God that hidest Thyself." The kingdom of God—that is, the reality of what He is and of His designs—is, Jesus said, as a treasure hid in a field. A veil, which a sinful materialism has thickened, hides God from men to-day. And for many it has been made all the more opaque by the blind fatalities of war. The old conundrums as to God's power or benevolence have been forced upon many minds by the dreadful experiences of war. It is no good denying this. The question *is* asked—answer it how you will—"Why, if, as the padre says, He is Love, does He not stop the war?" Such gropings have been embittered by the apparently uniform phenomenon of "the weather being Boche," and by the apparent singling out of the best for death.

It is also true to say that the treasure

would be no treasure were it not hidden. Life is deep, and its problems are incapable of superficial solution. Deep must answer to deep.

It is also right to remember, when we come to criticise Christian tradition and institutions, that they cannot disclose their treasures to casual spectators and critics, but only to those who bring to them the receptivity of love and the patience of familiar devotion. Christianity can never be superficially popular without at the same time being cheap. Like the king's daughter in the Psalm, she is "all-glorious *within*."

Yet, when all is said, Christianity, as an organised thing, which has come down from the past, has a perplexing surface. The minds which moulded it viewed the universe very differently from the mind of to-day. This difference emerges most plainly in regard to the use of Scripture. Church of England

18 RELIGION BEHIND THE FRONT

services are a mosaic of scriptural material. Their impact, therefore, upon the mind was congenial to those who were secure in the belief that every portion of Scripture was the literal word of God. They have an irritating and congesting effect upon those who either understand the Bible differently or at least are sure that it cannot, as it stands, all of it be historically true.

Again, men have the right to be perplexed at the impression made upon them by the Church. They are right in detecting a great discrepancy between the theory of the Church and her practice, her description and her reality. In nothing is this more true than in regard to Christian unity. Men can hear no reconciling harmonies in the Church's sectarian jangles. They cannot believe that any figure so blemished and broken can be the spouse of Christ. The surface of the broken

Body hides any treasure within it far out of sight.

THE CURRENCY OF WRONG IDEAS AND
PREJUDICES WHICH ALSO SEPARATE MEN
FROM REAL RELIGION

To this strange and disguising surface of organised Christianity there must be added the strange contents of the minds with which it comes in contact. They are so much jumble or dust-heap. They are the depository of unrelated odds and ends. Stale dregs of scriptural knowledge clog the memory. . . . All was summed up in the midshipmen whom a well-known chaplain found to be wholly ignorant of the Christian religion, and yet to be experts as to the dimension of the Tabernacle in the wilderness! And then there are the well-worn tracks in the common mind of certain associated ideas—of religion

as a calculating system, presided over by 'devil-dodgers,' for the squaring of accounts with God; or as merely so much abstinence and inhibition; or as a charm or source of good-luck in danger; and of religious obligation as satisfied by service-attendance. There is indeed a mass of dead value to be disburdened both from Christianity as presented to men and from the minds to which it is presented. There is a surface over it which keeps them out; there is a disinclination or incapacity in them to dig through it.

Thus I have come to have the sense of a great world of men—good-hearted fellows, better men in many ways than some of those who diagnose them, proved capable of noble service—who remain on the surface of the field of religion in pathetic separation from its hidden treasure. They are not against religion, however sensitive they may be

to the defects of its exponents. They are wonderfully susceptible to 'the real thing' when they meet it in a chaplain who loves them and shares their dangers with them. But as regards Christianity as a whole they are outside and not in possession. They are like detached sightseers (I have in mind groups in khaki whom I used to see drifting round the aisles of Amiens Cathedral) gazing at a strange monument. And all the while temptation is as strong as ever. War does not lessen *its* reality nor hide it beneath a veil. And, of course, it is true that the separation of men from religion is separation from a shrine which they know they are unfit to enter. Old sins cumber the surface of the field as well as repellent parsons or Balaam's ass. The struggle for character is unmitigated in intensity by modernity. Whether in war or peace, men need more than the

guidance of sound instinct. They need the reinforcement and the grip of conviction. I think the British world is living on a capital of inherited sound-heartedness, which will run out if it is not replenished by a real and enthusiastic faith.

VI

JESUS CHRIST, THE HIDDEN TREASURE AND THE STANDARD OF TRUE RELIGION

AND yet there the treasure is. It is Jesus Christ. The previous paragraphs may well provoke the protest—‘You say all this . . . that there’s this confusion, perplexity, and alienation. What is to be done? How is religion to gain or regain the lead?’ The answer to the protest is, ‘Go to the Gospels and begin to learn what religion is by understanding what was the religion which Jesus practised. That is the spot at which to let down a shaft through the surface of the field of traditional religion.

'That is the way inside. Leave other things on one side for the time and begin there, and see whither you are led.'

This answer is not based on conjecture but on experience. The alienation and confusion in regard to religion which many are feeling to-day is not new, it has been felt by a few for a long time past. Some of them are in a position to help others through their difficulties by leading them along a road which they themselves have travelled. It was the road which led them to Jesus of Nazareth. There has been a great rally to Him, as to a light in the darkness, as to a height amid rising floods. It has not been in vain. He has responded to the appeal. He has been rediscovered as the "one foundation" which cannot be shaken, though structures built thereon may totter and fall. Signs are abundant that the criticism

which in many cases started out only to destroy and to disintegrate has been changed on contact with Jesus into a constructive re-understanding of the Christian religion. It is not true that men had better stay in their present confusion for fear lest they should be bereft of religion altogether. The disentanglement of the old Christian deposits does not mean their disintegration. Those who thought so last century have been proved wrong. In contrast with their fearfulness the courage of others has shown that the Christian religion is not built on a foundation which crumbles upon investigation. It is built on Jesus Christ, whom men have found, the more they have gone to Him, to have the keys of their problems, and to be in fact, and not only in phrase, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." As men turn to Him they are given a touchstone or

standard by which they can test the accumulations of the Christian generations. They get a shape or proportion of faith according to which they may sift and disentangle the deposits of institutional Christianity. He becomes once more the 'Man with the fan,' who enters the threshing-floor of an old religion to purge out the wheat from the chaff.

VII

THE RELIGION OF JESUS OF NAZARETH —ITS ROOT IN THE REALITY OF THE FATHER.

I CANNOT attempt here a detailed study of the religion which Jesus practised.¹ I cannot do more than find an answer to the question, What was there in His religion the lack of which in ours has meant that religion has fallen from, or has not attained to, its proper place of leadership in the world?

For this purpose it is perhaps pos-

¹ I would refer my readers, if they need referring, to Dr. T. R. Glover's *The Jesus of History*.

sible without presumption to summarise the religion of Jesus. Religion for Him was a simple thing with a single focus and a main nerve. It was to do the will of the Father. Nothing else so centrally indicates His relationship to the religion of His people. He put His seal to the cardinal element in the religion of Israel—faith in the creative, purposive activity of God, Holy, Loving and Righteous. He found much else conglomerated with that essential element in the religion of His time. But He assumed that there was one spark alive in it, and for this He looked. It was faith in God. Where He found it He poured fuel on it and fanned its smouldering fires to a blaze. He went about looking for brethren who would share His own religion. “Looking round on the multitude, He said, ‘Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother.’” He expected to find

kindred souls responsive to the classical passage which tallied with His main aspiration : "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to announce release to the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind : to send away free those whom tyranny has crushed : to proclaim the year of acceptance with the Lord."¹

I think it is strange how often this essential preoccupation of Jesus has been missed by students of the Gospel. Whether through reaction from or little need of theology, men have frequently reduced His point of view to bare ethics. They have contrived to look at Him through lenses which neutralised the chief ray in the light of His life. Yet the one thing which accounts for the attraction, the reality,

¹ Luke iv. 18, 19 (Weymouth's translation).

the vitality, the zest and the joy of Jesus is that He was impelled at the main heart of Him by the conviction, that God who had made the world was at work and in action in human affairs with purposes of loving-kindness. This other-centredness was the secret of His humility and meekness—His selflessness. It explains His vision of potentiality in others. It is the spring of His realistic optimism. It explains His vehement disappointment at the recalcitrance of others. It indicates that the root of religion for Him lay not in weakness, nor weariness, nor sentimentality, nor fear, but before all else in entire co-operation of the whole self at the full with the energy of the Father. That was life to Him: that was His life. He lived for God—"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me and to finish His work." And as He lived, so He died, putting death

in its place, yet with clear-eyed sensitiveness to its agony. He set His face towards it and went through with the work which had been given Him to do.

It cannot be denied that His view of the world as the sphere of divine activity carried with it a practical dualism. His unique sense of the Father being at work was accompanied by His insight into a counter-world of evil. His allegiance to an order of divine beneficence—to a kingdom—brought Him into collision with an organised array of maleficence and a “power of darkness.” He came upon a strong man armed, than whom He was stronger. He was aware of spheres which had escaped from obedience to the Father’s will and had to be recovered and brought within it. He recognised a world of moral evil working out its results in the physical order. He saw things

which were *not* the will of the Father. Hence His active intolerance in the face of evil, so far removed from the passive acquiescence of much that has been named by His Name.

VIII

THE FAITH OF JESUS IN THE FATHER'S PURPOSE TO REFORM THE WORLD

HERE we reach that which we are seeking. I believe that if one saying can summarise the practical theology of Jesus, it is His emancipating declaration that "it is *not* the will of the Father that one of these little ones should perish." There beats through the words the energy of His faith in the Father's desire not only to maintain and conserve the world but to change, recover and reform it. This was the fire—the fire of God's love and righteous purpose—which Christ came to cast

upon the earth. And it is this fire which the intervening years have smothered. In the fatalism so closely wrapped round the common mind of to-day (and so naturally uppermost on the battle-field); in the travestied meaning of the clause "Thy will be done," whereby it becomes the expression of resignation in the face of that which is; in the degree of inertia with which Christians confront a mass of preventible and destructible evil and misery—we may see the measure of our departure from the mind of Jesus. The "one foundation" was once laid, but it has been lost to view by superimposed erections—by the hay of *a priori* conceptions of Absolute Deity, by the straw of unhistorically-derived Old Testament ideas, by the heavy timber of modern mechanistic materialism, by the tinsel of ecclesiasticism.¹

¹ Cf. 1 Cor. iii. 11-13, "For other foundation can no

OUR DEPARTURE FROM THIS FAITH

We get down here to the roots of a prevalent spiritual palsy. The Name of God has grown dim. He has become remote and negligible. He is thought of as inactive and unconcerned. Signs of this abound on every side, both in the world and in the Church. It is to be seen in the very look of the mean or vulgar squalor of modern urban civilisation. It is written over the face of much modern art. It finds perpetual emphasis in the dogmatic assertion, 'You will never change human nature.' It lies behind the toleration of 'the oldest profession in the world.' It is recognisable theologically in an other-worldliness which despairs of this world's betterment. It

man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire."

36 RELIGION BEHIND THE FRONT

is to be seen in that exaggerated emphasis on sacramental presence which works out at an absence elsewhere. It is to be detected in the emotional religion which finds God only in certain moods of feeling and loses Him at other times.

A fire has died down in the soul of man. It is the fire of faith in the Father's passionate purpose to renovate the world. It is the fire with which the soul of Jesus was on fire, and which made Him the light of men.

WHY RELIGION IS IN THE REAR AND NOT IN THE VAN

This departure from His mind accounts for the falling back of religion from the van to the rear of human affairs. It accounts for its failure to assume the lead. If God and His purpose be regarded as inoperative

here, then religion becomes mainly concerned with our relationship to Him *hereafter*. It follows behind in the track of the world's energetic business in order to comfort some of its victims and to 'save' them for another world. It serves as a palliative and a refuge. It does the work—the valuable work—of a Y.M.C.A. hut at the front. Meanwhile the sphere into which men throw the vitality that is in them—their life's work—escapes from its inspiration and guidance. The one thing which can give religion the power of positive leadership and rescue it from morbidity and self-regard is the fact that God is concerned with the world and has purposes for it.

The war has called out an immense volume of selfless, good-humoured devotion and public spirit. The appeal of a great cause, the call of adventure, the peril to the commonweal, have

tugged men out of indulgent and self-interested courses and forced them into co-operation. A certain simple salvation and an unmistakable honour have come to them in hearing and answering the call to service. There have been many drawbacks. Sluggishness and selfishness have been mixed with the response and have hindered it, but in the main the tasks which needed men have been matched by a willingness and capacity to grapple with them. The problem for religion — and for civilisation — is how to employ amid the freedom of peace those resources of goodwill which the necessities and rewards of war have shown to be latent in the average man.

Religion can never solve the problem if Jesus was wrong about the Father. If He was wrong, He was all wrong, for He stood for that one thing—the Father at work. He adventured Him-

self without reserve on that one reality. He was met by the temptation to do otherwise, but He thrust the temptation from Him.¹ He surrendered Himself simply and wholly to the onward movement of the Father's will. If He was wrong, He is but a pretender to the throne of the world, and His Kingdom is but a phrase. But if He was right, He and His gospel can save the world. For there is in men, sin notwithstanding, 'kingdom-capacity.' That capacity—manifest to-day by sea and land and in the air—is the means whereby God would succeed in making a righteous order to be sovereign in the life of men.

¹ *E.g.* Luke iv. 5-8, "And he led Him up, and shewed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto Him, To Thee will I give all this authority, and the glory of them: for it hath been delivered unto me: and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship before me, it shall all be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Cf. Luke xii. 50, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."

IX

THE VINDICATION OF THE FAITH OF JESUS, AND JESUS, HIMSELF THE VINDICATION

THE point reached here may be called the cruciality of the Cross and Resurrection. I mean by this that the one thing which was crucial when Jesus died upon the Cross was whether He was right about the Father. One thing was at issue on Calvary—it was the character of the Father. I have tried to treat of this elsewhere.¹ Here I must be satisfied with enforcing that what is most certain in Christianity historically is that at a certain date in

¹ *The Mind of the Disciples.* Macmillan & Co.

secular history some men who had been the friends of Jesus bore into the world a witness. It was a witness to a tried thing—to something which had been put to final proof and had emerged triumphant. The tried thing was the character of God. The primary Apostolic message was about God, nothing less.¹ That, first; corollaries, consequences, applications, second. An apparently foolish message was preached, and it was about God. The Cross, which on Golgotha had seemed to placard God's feebleness, was proclaimed as His power and His wisdom. Jesus had put the first thing first and went with it into the valley of death—

¹ Take as an instance the recurrences, fourteen in number, of the name of God in one short chapter of St. Paul's earliest epistle (1 Thess. ii.). Or the message which shoots, as a jet of water, out of the heart of the man to whom, perhaps, the nature of the crisis at Calvary came home most deeply: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who according to His great mercy *begat us again* unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter i. 3).

the valley of final decision. It came out of His passion and resurrection first—*God* fulfilling His purpose, achieving His will, making the omnipotence of His Love to prevail. The single condition whereby religion can be saved from being merely the projection of human fearfulness and spiritual sickness was made good, namely, that, whatsoever man might be, *God is God*—the Father is what Jesus believed Him to be. Here is the light which “as a pillar of fire” is to go “before the human race in its great march through history.” It is the light of the knowledge of what God is, shining out of darkness “in the face of Jesus Christ.” It is Jesus Christ, the light of the world. For He is the embodiment, the incarnation of the reality in which He trusted, namely, the Father. He is the pledge that what He said was real is real. In Him the religion of which He was

the exponent was made actual. In Him the ideal of all that religion can be was wrought into reality.

O salve Crux, spes mundi unica!
As we look at the Cross, in the light of the Resurrection, its primary message rings out—"God reigns: His kingdom has come and His will has been done, as in heaven so on earth. He has established, in advance, His rule or order of love and righteousness which shall extend throughout the world."

The bringing of the world under an order which accords with God's fatherhood and with man's brotherhood is the goal whither history is to march. The Christian religion has it in it to lead the way thither, in that *its first meaning is that God leads the way*. It is for men to follow in filial devotion, following Jesus in the way of the Cross, and in the fellowship with one another of His Spirit, till God is all in all.

X

GRANTED THAT THERE IS A LIGHT TO FOLLOW—CAN SINNERS FOLLOW IT?

THERE is then a pillar of Divine fire for the world to follow in its onward march. “He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” What more is there to be said? Is it necessary to go further than the point at which we see the ideal of all religion exemplified and realised in Jesus Christ?

It would at any rate be a great thing if men acquired a clear idea of this ideal of religion. It would give them a criterion by which to judge of religion. It would give them a “proportion of

faith." They would know what shape religion should take. They would see what is living tissue and what is dead matter in current religion. They would know what chaff needs winnowing away.

That would be a great thing. But it would be insufficient, for it falls short of *real-politik*. It does not face all the facts. And, in the foremost place, it does not face the fact that we are not Jesus—that we are sinners. There is, therefore, more to be said; and it is about sin, which separates man from God and makes him incapable of doing His will.

THE COMPLICATION OF THE FACT OF SIN BY THE MYSTERY OF THE HIDDENNESS OF GOD

Yet I doubt if anything that is said about sin and the need of man's reconciliation with God will get fully home

on very many minds to-day if it is not accompanied by the recognition — to put it boldly — of the need of God's reconciliation with man. Along with the mystery of sin which blinds men to God, there is the mystery of the veil which hides God from men. It is not only that in our impurity of heart we cannot see God, but that He is difficult to be seen. I suggest that Christian thought, grounded on the supposed historicity of the first chapters of Genesis, has been too ready to write off the tragedy and confusion of the world in terms of human blame, and, in so doing, has left out of account what is due to the hiddenness of God. Nothing perhaps is more characteristic of what must be called modern thought than the sense that Christian orthodoxy has attributed too much to human fault. The thing can be put blasphemously, but that does not justify its being

hushed up. The Church can never have the pains of the world written on its heart, if it refuses to recognise the genuine affliction of many souls over the mystery of God. It will fail—it fails—to commend what is due to God, if it is unsympathetic with those who are perplexed by the enigma of His character. Men hear that God is Love, but they are sensitive to the facts of life which seem to confute the statement. This is nothing new, yet it deserves ampler recognition. I believe that Christianity as salvation from sin, and as the remedy for sin, cannot be effectively commended to-day unless this prior problem is candidly recognised. In other words, the good news of what God is in Himself (or the light upon the mystery of His nature) must come before the good news of what He is in relation to sin (or His solution of the tragedy of our sin).

Illumination must come before redemption, or rather before the realisation of our need of redemption. We must see "the King, the Lord of Hosts" before we can cry, "Woe is me . . . I am a man of unclean lips." And it is hard to see the King in this strange world. A sense of the difficulty is widespread. The question is not whether God is. That is seldom in doubt. I think a Yorkshire miner expressed that finally: "'A says to mysen' as 'a cuts out t' coal, 'There mus' be a summat.'" The question is, what is that "summat"? what is God?

THE MIND OF TO-DAY MORE AWARE
OF THIS COMPLICATION THAN THE
MIND WHICH ST. PAUL SHARED WITH
HIS AGE

In dealing with this question I must own to a divergence from a good deal

of Christian tradition, or at any rate from a good deal of its emphasis or proportion. And the divergence is radical because it is divergence from part at least of the thought of St. Paul.¹

It may well be asked, 'who are we, who are you,' to diverge from the great Apostle? The answer is that the divergence is rather from *the tradition which St. Paul inherited*—from the context of his mind—than from his gospel. The general scheme of things into which his glorious good news of reconciliation has to be fitted to-day is widely different from the scheme which he shared with his time. Were he here he would, I

¹ I recognise that what I say with reference to the earlier chapters of the Epistle to the Romans may be 'turned' in some measure by making much of the passage in the 8th chapter, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, etc." But the divergence of thought to-day from the thought of the earlier chapters remains. I treat of it because it illustrates better and more inclusively than any other instance the discord of many minds with Christianity as over-exclusively a remedy for sin.

believe, be the first to admit this, just as he would—can it be doubted?—express surprise at the use to which literalism has put every word of the letters which he threw off to his converts.

At the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul starts at once with the fact of human sin in relation to God. He starts at once with God's anger and with man's inexcusable fault. "For God's anger is being revealed from heaven against all iniquity, and against the iniquity of men who through iniquity suppress the truth. God is angry: because what may be known about Him is plain to their inmost consciousness; for He Himself has made it plain to them. For from the very creation of the world, His invisible perfections—namely, His eternal power and divine nature—have been rendered intelligible and clearly visible by His works, *so that these men are*

without excuse."¹ With Scripture² ready to his hand, he passes in chap. iii. to the demonstration how "man's unrighteousness sets God's righteousness in a clearer light"; and with vehement vigour, reinforced by a terrible mass of texts ("There is not one righteous man," etc., vv. 10-18), he writes off everything in terms of human guilt. And, as one who shared in a prevailing view of Scripture, he has (in chap. v.) still further reinforcement in the tradition about Adam accepted as historical: "the judgement which one individual provoked resulted in condemnation . . . through the transgression of the one individual, death made use of the one individual to seize the sovereignty. . . . As the result of a single transgression . . . a condemnation extends to the

¹ Romans i. 18-20, Weymouth's translation.

² Psalm li. 4, cxvi. 11: "That Thou mayest be shown to be just in the sentence Thou pronouncest. . . . And gain Thy cause when Thou contendest."

whole race" (v. 16-18). Thus he passes to his goal, to his tremendous and ever-glorious evangel of the free gift of God which immeasurably outweighs man's transgression, of the blessed acquittal as the result of faith, of the "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 1), and of the reconciliation with God which issues in exultation in God (v. 10).

XI

MAN BAFFLED IN GOD-HIDING DARK-
NESS UNTIL THE CROSS RENDS THE
VEIL

Now I want to ask whether in all this St. Paul had not a preternaturally fair and clear starting-place. If I may be pardoned the use of a figure from golf, he seems to start off with a clean tee-shot. He seems able to start so certainly from the God whose righteousness had been offended by man. Men are hard put to it to-day to start so fairly. As regards a certainty about the nature of God they have, as it were, to begin by playing 'out of the rough.' And not only so, but the

story of man as religious, which historians have recently unrolled, reveals others at other times in a like position—groping in a like darkness. Can it be said so squarely that the Divine nature has been rendered intelligible and clearly visible by God's works?

I think of the melancholy verdict to which the intensely religious soul of India has so often recurred, that the world is too evil for God to be good, and that therefore the desirable thing is extinction. I think of the pessimism which hangs around Greek thought (despite its vivid love of life and beauty), which found classical expression in Plato, to whom this visible order was but a cave or world of shadows, outside of which—and in the heavens—the realities of truth and beauty and goodness could alone be found. I think of the number of greatest minds in history in whose view of things the final

note has been one of tragedy. I think of the panorama of nature unfolded by post-Darwinian science. I think of Huxley's warning that the natural order is indifferent to the moral ends of men.¹ I think of the difficulty of fully rebutting the suggestion that, behind this war and its immediate causation by individual actors, there lies the grim urgency of biological necessity in the struggle of nations for existence. I think of the degree to which the problem of pain is uppermost in many souls in the student world, and perhaps especially in women's colleges.

Into such thoughts St. Paul's dogmatism breaks with the shock of something over-simple and over-certain. After all, the setting of his mind was that of a long-grounded and engrained scriptural certainty. As his argument

¹ I do not forget that the philosophy of science is now at work to help correct its own exaggerations and to repair its own ravages.

moves forward, it has under it so much scriptural 'way.' Texts are readily at hand to lend their weight to the momentum of his thought. Hence, for those who do not and never can read the Old Testament as he read it, the impossibility of following him into the positions whither the logic of predestination carried him. In face of the pathos of man's age-long cries in the darkness, can all mouths be stopped with a text—"Shall the thing moulded say to him who moulded it, 'Why have you made me thus?'"¹ Can the confusion of the human soul, and its tragic alienation from God, be interpreted in terms of hardening by God, with the interpretation enforced by a 'cursing Psalm'?²

No, here we diverge from St. Paul and with a good deal of tradition. We

¹ Romans ix. 20, Weymouth's translation.

² Romans xi. 7 ff.

break out from the limits of his thought into desolate places, where, in face of the mystery of God and of experience, the great cries of doubt reverberate. We cry out with Clough—

If there is battle, 'tis battle by night,
I stand in the darkness . . .

and his is only one of many candid voices of protest and rebellion. Nor are these the voices of merely human revolt. They are channels of the Spirit, who down the ages has fired the human conscience into criticism of religious tradition. The great creative moments in the story of the soul of man are those in which received tradition is purified by passing under the judgement of a quickened moral sense. It was so in the time of the great tragedians in Greece; it was so in the prophetic period of Jewish history. It is so in some measure to-day. The gold of Christianity is intermixed with a dross

which conscience and a feeling for reality detects. In the case in point the dross is scripturalism: it is, to mix metaphors, "a bed shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it." There is no disloyalty to St. Paul in detecting in the mental make-up which belonged to him as a converted Pharisee a dross of literalism which was mixed with the imperishable gold of his gospel.

And yet Scripture saves us. For, as we read the Old Testament afresh and understand something of the vital experience which was condensed into its writings, we join company with its latest and truly original writers, and we find in them—in prophet and psalmist and wisdom-writer—uniquely vehement and poignant expressions of searching, and dismay in face of the mystery of God's character. As we pierce the surface of Scriptural tradition and loosen its accumulated certainty, we come upon

the soul of the Jew in spiritual travail. As we go behind the concentrated light of the canon of the Old Testament, we recover sympathetic touch with those who knew the agony of living in the twilight of the gods. Or, if this is too strong, we find the light of Jewish theism ever threatened by the onset of an obliterating darkness. We find Jewish faith in virtue of its very intensity mixed with questioning and protest. And thus, by travelling the road of history as distinct from that of tradition, we approach Christ with the need which He alone meets. It is not only the need of sin and guilt; it is the need of God. We come to Christ with our hearts overlaid by a veil which is lifted only by Him. We come to the Cross not only with a sense of guilt, but as beggared and baffled—at times—by the darkness of the world. It is for our theism and not only for our

pardon that we cling to the Cross, bringing nothing in our hands. It is for that very "knowledge of God's invisible perfections and of His eternal power and divine nature," which St. Paul wrote of as obvious to anyone, that we come to Calvary. As we stand there in the mid-day darkness it is nothing less than the nature of God which is in suspense. And there, then, with fresh wonder, we see the King high and lifted up. With a renewed joy we see the Easter light piercing the God-hiding darkness. With a deepened sense of how foolish the message is—foolish with the foolishness of that which is beyond human estimate—we glory in Christ crucified as the revelation of what God is—"Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

XII

THE REVELATION OF LOVE TRIUMPHANT
OVER EVIL REVEALS BOTH THE BLACK-
NESS OF SIN AND THE WAY OF RECON-
CILIATION

THE Christian religion can lead the way in human progress, for it fulfils the first requirement of leadership. It makes the leader known. It bears into the world the illumination of the mystery of God. Illumination is first. Then follows the need of redemption. When we have seen the King, then we cry, "Woe is me, I am unclean." The cry follows all the more inevitably and genuinely on the vision because of what the vision is. It is the vision of God

crucified. It is not the vision of offended majesty so much as the terrific vision of wounded love and profaned holiness. The light which shines from the Cross is a terrible light because it shows men what they have done. They have crucified God. They are, as it were, like one who unknowingly has hit his mother in the face. That is what men found that they had done in contriving the death of Jesus, in consenting to it, and in forsaking Him in it. Nobody knew fully what they were doing. They couldn't see what the crime meant to the Father, for they couldn't see Him. They did not know what they were doing to Him. Would they have refrained if they had known? Anyhow, they did not know. But Jesus knew, and He pleaded for them, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Here, then, we turn with a revulsion

of feeling to the next thing without which the religion which Jesus practised can never be ours and can never lead men forward. It is reconciliation with God. If the veil which hides God from us is lifted, if in Christ we have not only the example of sonship but the revelation of the Father—if God is reconciled to man—our dire need of reconciliation with Him is brought home to us. In whatever measure we realise that sin—our blindness and apathy and selfishness—has crucified God, in the same measure we realise our need of reconciliation and forgiveness. It is little to be wondered at that the sense of sin is weak to-day. It is in direct ratio with the weakness of the sense that God is concerned with or affected by human actions.

WE REJOIN ST. PAUL

Here, then, we come back to St. Paul,

and, so to say, rejoin him with a vengeance. Once we have any sight at all of what sin does to God, we know that no jot of St. Paul's gospel can be abated, that no spark of his exultation in the free gift of God's forgiving love towards sinners, immeasurably outweighing their sin, is to be extinguished. We are to-day, compared to St. Paul and to many former Christians, far less certain (with an inherited certainty) of God apart from Christ, and therefore we are far less sensitive to and jealous for the divine holiness and righteousness. Yet when once we have seen in Jesus Christ the light of what God is and suffers, then we can go to school with St. Paul *con amore*, that we may be overwhelmed with that which overwhelmed him—the good news of God reconciling the world unto Himself. We should do so with a yet greater sense of need if our sense of sin had

in it the generosity of solidarity, *i.e.* if we realised at all our individual part in corporate and social sin.¹ If we saw the measure of our own sin in the degradation of others less fortunately placed, if we saw what was done or not done to others by social wrongs, if we saw that things done or not done to them are done or not done to the Lord,—if we had a sense of the perpetual passion of God, we should need more than illumination. Illumination by itself can never save men. What is wrong in them is something far deeper than can be cured by being shined upon. The shining upon us of the blinding light of the Cross—blinding because revealing the holiness of God and His unmitigatable antagonism to evil—is but mockery and torture if it stops short there; if there is no way

¹ The war has surely revealed by how many links all parts of society are bound to one another.

of approach to Him Whom we have pierced; if Christ made no free and perfect offering of responsive love, from man's side and for man, to the Father; if we cannot identify ourselves with His propitiation; if there is no cleansing and renewing energy of His Spirit to enter into our inmost hearts and there to restore, maintain, and perfect our sonship. This is the old Gospel in summary. But there is indeed no Gospel for the world but the old Gospel, when once it has been put into a new setting. The radical tragedy of life is sin, and only that which can deal radically with sin can be salvation.

I think that the wonderful revelation of human excellence and nobility in the war does but intensify the truth of this. The more clear the heights to which human nature can attain, the more tragic the depths to which it can fall. The war has disclosed how mixed

human nature is. A man who risked his life to save another's was known, at the same time, to rob him. A hero in the trenches may be a brute at the base or at home. Moreover the more certain we are—and we may be very certain—of the unconscious Christianity in men, the more pathetic it is that they are not filled and possessed by a conscious delight in Christ. The more precious men are, the more certainly are they made for God and the more incalculable are the things He could do through them were they given to Him. If the war tends to confute all that would blacken human nature, it also opens up a new spectacle of waste and abuse.

There is, I think, a world of shallow thought and easy talk from which to part company here; and a modernity lacking in moral fibre of which to beware. The fact is we need everything to come to us from God, both the dis-

closure of what He is and the power to make answer to it. All must be from Him, both the objective truth, presented to men and moving ahead of them, of God triumphant over evil, without Whom, as an object, religion can never be joyous nor un-self-conscious nor childlike ; and the subjective capacity in men to break with the past and to become not only in name, but in actuality, brethren and followers of Jesus—doers of God's will.

All *is* from Him,¹ both the Love revealed just where it seemed it never could be, and the way home to Him Who loves us so. Thanks be to God!

¹ 2 Corinthians v. 18, "And all is from God who has reconciled us to Himself through Christ."

XIII

DEAD VALUES OF WHICH TRADITIONAL CHRISTIANITY HAS TO BE DISBURDENED BY A RETURN TO THE MIND OF JESUS

THE religion the main outlines and proportions of which emerge in what has gone before, has in it the capacity to march at the head of the world's progress. It contains the regulative ideal of what true religion is as it was practised by Jesus. It contains the two necessary conditions whereby alone His religion is rendered imitable by others. They are the illumination of the obscurity surrounding the Father in whom Jesus alone wholly trusted,

and the making possible the response by men to the constraining love of the Father which was embodied in Jesus, His incarnate Son. To be a Christian is to be a brother of Jesus of Nazareth by being given the light of the knowledge of God wherein to walk, and the grace and power of the Spirit whereby to co-operate with and fulfil His will. By contrast with this we can distinguish dead or partially dead elements (or values) in Christianity as it has often come to be understood and practised. Such are—the idea of God as so remote and unapproachable as to be little concerned with the lives of His children here; the idea of the Christian life as a preoccupation with death and with after-death; the consequent prominence in religion of the spirit of bargaining over rewards and punishments after death; the idea that the end of religion is self-salvation; the idea that the end of

religion is to conserve the Church ; the idea of religion as a pleasant emotion ; the idea of religion as a matter merely of human activity and morality ; the idea of the world as being either self-sufficient or beyond hope of improvement.

The fact is, we have to recognise that even from early times the religion named after Jesus Christ has been only in partial accord with His mind. That is, I think, not at all a judgement of despair. Rather it is in harmony with the fact that our Lord did not leave on earth an infallible book or a complete system of truth and practice, but a society which was to grow, under the discipline and guidance of His Spirit, into an ever fuller understanding and a more complete co-operation with the will of God. The periods at which criticism of imperfections or exaggerations in current Christianity becomes

keen are periods of hope. They are spring-times of growth and renewal, during which men's minds go back to Jesus, as portrayed in the Gospels, in order that they may press forward into better conformity with His living mind, and in all things "grow up into Him which is the head." Never before has the general background of religion, as a permanent factor in the development of the race, been so widely reviewed and understood as to-day. Never before has the special background of the religion of the New Testament, namely, the historical religion of Israel, been so appreciated as the story of a people's experience and education, or been so freed from the distortions of literary canonisation. Never before since the beginning has the mind of Jesus, as portrayed by His friends, been so laid open by historical inquiry. Never before was there in the world, or in so

much of the world, so deep and wide a sense—confused though it be—that the one thing needful is to understand that mind and to apply it to human affairs. It is the very last hour for faint-heartedness.

XIV

HOW CAN MEN IN THE FULL TIDE OF
LIFE AND WORK SERVE *AD MAJOREM*
DEI GLORIAM?

I WOULD go on, therefore, to consider the question, How can the mind of Jesus be applied to life? We share His mind, we become His brethren, by doing the will of God. The crucial question to ask here is, What is the will of God, and where does it operate? It is a crucial question, for unless it can be answered plainly and practically religion will not be able to mix with life and lead it. And by life is meant especially the ordinary and secular occupations of men—that which engages

already the zeal, the dutifulness, the enterprise, the sportsmanship of the best men, or of men at their best. That is the sphere in regard to which—remembering what was said about staff-officers—it seems that men commonly find it hard to see the point of religion. At the same time life is made up of many parts and many interests, and does not consist in work alone. Religion is meant to embrace the whole of life, its work and its leisure, its public business and its private reserves. But the point is that it must dominate a man's chief energies and performances if it is to touch his life as a whole. Or, more precisely, it must so possess a man's whole soul as to inspire his main activities. Is there, then, a will of God for staff-officers as staff-officers? What is the will of God for flying men, for manufacturers, for bricklayers, for this, that, or the other? The questions mean,

more precisely, if we are to be true to the mind of Jesus—Where and in regard to what is the Father waiting for the co-operation of such men as sons? According to the mind of Jesus, to do the will of God was not so much human activity and duty-doing, as to be caught up into harmony with divine activity. Where, then, as regards men in various callings, has God a will which He would work out through their co-operation? I would answer: In their ordinary work and in the personal relationships which it involves. If so, the will of God for flying men is flying; for manufacturers, manufacturing; for town-councillors, town-councillings—out of love for Him and to His greater glory.

A SUBALTERN AND THE WILL OF GOD

I have been forced on to these questions by contact with soldiers. I do not believe that we religious folk

commonly have got the right answer ready to the question, What is the will of God for a subaltern? I believe we should generally answer that he should keep straight; that he should be a good Churchman and go to Communion; that he should be assured of salvation, etc. These answers are partial, for they miss the main thing in a subaltern's life, which is, if he is worth his salt, being a subaltern. The will of God for a subaltern is platoon-leading. Not that merely to lead a platoon (or merely to do any other thing) is to do the will of God. But that if a subaltern loves God and gives to Him his heart, it is in platoon-leading that he is to glorify His Name. For platoon-leading is that which engages his main manhood. It is the sphere in which, according to the mind of Jesus, the Father needs the co-operation of a son. It is a sphere of personal relationships—a

sphere, therefore, which God would bring under a reign of love, honour, and fair dealing. The will of God for a subaltern is the infinite and romantic task of loving his men—not necessarily of liking them, though certainly this will often follow, but of putting their interests first and his own second. Where such love reigns, there *is* the kingdom of God. Imperfectly, no doubt, for this whole order of things is imperfect and transient. But, nevertheless, in an imperfect world, and under the conditions of human imperfection, there *is* the kingdom. That it may come, God desires men to ignore themselves and take up their cross and follow Christ. That is the work which He would achieve through them. In doing it—in losing themselves in the attempt to do it—they are to find their own souls' salvation.¹

¹ Cf. Mark viii. 35 ff., "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My

I will not stay at the moment to consider the complication arising from the fact that the work of a subaltern involves the killing of others; but I will proceed to the average man at work in peace time. When the killing is over men will return to be busy again at ordinary work. The difficulty felt by the soldier in seeing what is the point of religion for himself *qua* soldier will recur for, say, the manufacturer. Will he—does he—associate manufacturing, and the personal relationships it involves, with God's will and with the coming of His Kingdom? Sometimes, but not often. For the sphere of industry, to which so much human energy is devoted, and the sphere of Divine activity are seldom thought of as connected. The world of men's

sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

work and interest has become divorced from the 'religious world.' The former is in the stream of life, the latter is on its bank. There is Sunday and there are week-days. They lie apart, or else they are all alike secular. Yet men are made to be interested and absorbed in occupations. The better the man the more of his life and capacity goes into his job. If religion or co-operation with the will of God is unrelated to a man's work, then it is apt to have no central or guiding force in his life. It will become a side-show, or a merely personal and private affair, or a domestic affair—'all right for the missus and the kids'—or a hobby of people of a certain temperament, or a tolerable means of 'passing the time away' (as the men so often say), or an affair for those who go 'into the Church'—a parsonic business—or a possible last resort when death draws

near. It will have ceased to embrace and lead life.

I do not forget the qualifying considerations which occur here. For many men, alas, as things are, their work is the dullest thing in their lives. It is often impersonal, mechanical, fit only to be got through. For many men their real life lies at home or in the occupations of leisure. There is also, I allow, much to be said, as has been said so often, about the essential place of home in life and in religion. There is old age and failure to be allowed for, and so on. And yet there is a great world of business, enterprise, industry, art, politics, sport, which exacts and receives from men in their prime the best of which they are capable. It is only a part of life, but it is a central part. If it lies outside religion, if God has no will for it, if in its social order—so often hard and

cruel—He would not make transformations, if *there* He would not bring in His kingdom, then there are many men who will never make much of religion. They will be in life's mid-stream. Religion will be in a backwater.

That is, in effect, what has come about. Life has become divorced from the thought of God and His will. That is the deepest lesson of the war. The war has its roots in a Europe-wide God-forgetfulness. It is easy to overlook the fact by concentrating attention on detestation of the Germans. But the lesson has got to be learnt before peace returns, else we shall relapse to the false peace into which war broke. We shall return to horrors of peace as great as those of war. We shall go back to the civilisation which, despite its wonderful energies and inventions, was futile and self-destructive and ready to perish.

RELIGIOSITY IN PART RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE GULF BETWEEN RELIGION AND
LIFE

We religious folk should lay this to heart. For we are much to blame. I owe much to a great Christian teacher, Fr. Herbert Kelly of the Society of the Sacred Mission. He was for ever saying that it was religious people and their religiosity which were killing religion for the average man. I travelled with him once in America. He was fascinated by the driving energy of its life and business. But he felt that, in the middle of it all, religious people, while full of ecclesiastical and religious activities, were oblivious of one primary question—What does *God* want to do with America . . . with its absorbing stream of life? They had, he said, substituted an interest in their own religious states and interests, or in

Church or institutional activities, for an interest, a faith, in God and in God's world. And meanwhile most men, he maintained, refuse to be interested "in their own insides." They remain outward-looking. They insist on being interested in their jobs. Religious emotions and ecclesiastical activities they leave to those made that way, to those who like that sort of thing, to their women-folk and to parsons.

We must go back to Jesus and His mind. When He spoke of the treasure hidden in a field, He was thinking of the ordinary secular life in which He saw men spend themselves. He saw how trivial and soulless it could become. He saw how its surface could hide God and make Him appear remote. He saw how much faith was demanded of men for them to believe that God cared about their little affairs. Hence He looked for brethren, for simple but

great hearts, in which a wondering faith in the living God was alive. He looked for those who would share His faith that, beneath the baffling surface of life, there lay the possibility of a new order which God and man could make to prevail. He looked for and foresaw the leavening of all life by a kingdom of righteousness. He found nobody able fully to share His faith and expectation. He alone could grasp the hidden treasure of God's reality and purpose. So He died to give substance to His own incommunicable vision. He paid the price for making it realisable. He brought that of which He spoke to light. He won for it victory. He overcame the world.

XV

THE SAVOUR OF THE SALT WHICH IS TO SEASON THE WORLD

IF this mind of Jesus were applied to life, religion would find expression in terms of secular occupation. Life would be leavened. Local politics, for example, would be consecrated. Business would be done to the glory of God. Religion would be mixed with everyday pedestrian affairs. It would emphatically be concerned with this world. Now against this two objections will certainly be raised. It will be said that I do not allow for the prominence in New Testament religion of (*a*) enmity with the world, (*b*) other-worldliness.

(a) ENMITY WITH THE WORLD AS
ORGANISED APART FROM GOD

The question of enmity or nonconformity with the world rose to the surface a little earlier, when I touched, but did not stay, upon the fact that the killing of others introduced a complication into the performance of the will of God by a subaltern. Is war a business within the circle of which the will of God can be accomplished? Is it not for Christians to separate themselves from such employment rather than to leaven and consecrate it? So too in peace time, is it not for Christians to come out of the world and its traffic and to keep themselves separate?

As regards the whole problem of the relationship of Christianity to war I must incur the charge of evasiveness. The question is too big for discussion here. It has also been fully debated

of late.¹ And as regards the rights and wrongs of this present war I must also decline controversy. *À l'heure qu'il est*, those who are still of opinion that it is no Christian man's work to share in the maintenance of the world's quarrel with Germany would be unmoved by anything I said.

But this I would say. The world can only be changed from within. Separation from the world—or what roughly may be called monasticism—is, as a main solution, a policy of despair. It is also a policy of unreality, for the links which bind men into one society and destiny are inseparable. Yet only that which challenges and crosses the world can change it. The problem for Christians is to be in the world and yet not to be of it. Experience has shown that the more men

¹ I would refer here to two books—(1) *So as by Fire*, by the late Professor H. S. Holland, and (2) *The Challenge of the Present Crisis*, by Dr. Fosdick.

venture into the thick of the world, as it is organised apart from God, with the desire to glorify His Name there, the more they provoke suspicion, ridicule, opposition, and persecution. They tread the way of the Cross and of its triumph. It becomes plain to them, as situated in the world, that there are some occupations and institutions in it which are not to be tolerated and improved, but destroyed. It is not, for instance, open to Christians to keep a brothel or to own slaves. They cannot engage in *any* war for *any* cause. Their task, as a body, is to create and maintain a tension between Christian ideals and worldly standards, and thus, by way of painful struggle and compromise, to bring the whole order under the law of Christ. This Christian warfare has only begun. Sometimes it seems to be not even begun, so completely does Christianity appear to be

at peace with the world. But it has, in point of fact, been waged long enough to show that once an institution is challenged by the Christian conscience, its days are numbered. And we have lived to see war undergo such challenge as never before. The number of its days may still be long, but it has passed under sentence. It is a work of the devil, which Jesus will destroy.

(b) OTHER-WORLDLINESS

The second objection to the immersion of Christianity in the business of this world is that the religion of the New Testament is incurably other-worldly. It will be said that it abounds in treasures laid up in heaven, in affections set on things above, in a citizenship in heaven. It will be said that I have ignored one half of our Lord's mind, namely, His vision of this world

as immediately to end. Here we run right into the eschatological problem—the question, that is, of ‘the last things’ (ἔσχατα) and of the end of the world. Some scholars have urged that the religion of the New Testament is not concerned with this world, for the reason that this world in its view is speedily to end and to give place to another order of things. And yet this world has not ended. Only a relatively small number of theologically-minded people have felt the full pressure of this question, as it bears on the authority of our Lord and of the New Testament. But a wider world is quite aware that the interest of Christianity, as it has come down to us, is predominantly other-worldly. This has been brought home to chaplains by the impatience of generals. The latter are frequently eager that the power of religion should be available

‘to help the men.’ They look for something applied here and now. They are often restive at the apparent concern of religion rather with the hereafter than with the here and now.

THE VISIONARY IS THE PRACTICAL
REFORMER

Once more the limits of a tract for the times are threatened by a great, urgent and fascinating question. I can only say a few broad and general things here, though what I do say is vital to my main argument, and is not a diplomatic courtesy to an embarrassing problem. I am sure that the possibility of men being caught up in a crusade for the coming of the Kingdom here, is essentially bound up with their looking upon this world as a transient order through which they pass to a world beyond. In short, the opposition be-

tween 'Kingdom come' and 'Kingdom here' is not between contradictories but between complementaries. The opposition can be roughly outlined as follows. If there is exaggeration in the outline it will help and not hinder.

On the one hand, there is the gospel of the 'Kingdom here.' It is preached by labour-leaders in reaction from the other-worldly hymns which they learnt as children. It is a programme of gradual amelioration of prevailing social conditions. Its natural setting is evolutionary. It reckons that God is concerned with human progress. It appeals to men to co-operate with Him for a progressive extension of an order of righteousness over the sphere of human affairs. Its programme in detail condescends to the particulars of ordinary secular routine and administration. Its raw material is legislation, hygiene, civics, economics, industry,

and so forth. Its watchword is *Labore est orare*.

On the other hand there is the gospel of 'Kingdom come.' It proffers a vision of this world as dwarfed by eternity. It tends to despair of betterment here, but offers the consolation of a 'better time' coming in heaven. It expects revolution, not evolution. It prognosticates sudden endings and catastrophes rather than a gradual progressive evolution. Its concern is with the ultimate destiny of the individual soul. It would pluck souls as brands from out of a naughty world, to save them from an imminent destruction. Worldly affairs, secular interests, are but transient shadows amid which it is misery to wait long. Reality lies 'beyond.' *Ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*.

CITIZENSHIP IN HEAVEN IS VITAL
TO CIVICS HERE

As I write I feel, as it were, hands stretching out from either opposed side towards reconciliation and mutuality. Were my philosophy not so rusted by war, I could point out the compatibility between evolution and revolution, between process and catastrophe. It was the first thought of evolutionist thinkers to reduce growth to smooth continuity and to the predictable. Second and deeper thoughts have allowed for the occurrence of unexpected discontinuities and crises in "creative evolution." But the main thing to say is that the vision of another world, to which this world leads, rescues this world from its transiency. If the Kingdom is to come in Upper Tooting, then Upper Tooting must be set against the back-

ground of eternity. The little, banal, local, disappointing affairs of this world—and man himself—only get lasting urgency and dramatic value when viewed as connected with another world. All things here, right down to drains, acquire a graduated importance because they are linked with the destiny of souls travelling onward. That further destiny does not dwarf mankind but gives it stature. Cut off the further prospect, and little man and his affairs dwindle down into a brief mortality and lose worth.

An exaggerated spiritualism and individualism have been at work in this whole matter. They have depreciated the intimate connection of body and soul. They have forgotten that individual souls are parts of a corporate whole. The souls of individuals and the soul of mankind as a whole have a physical embodiment and environment.

Though the physical body decays and perishes, yet it plays its part in the making or marring of the soul. As a Kingdom—as something ordered well or ill—the whole physical order matters to all eternity. The more human affairs (both spiritual and physical) are ordered righteously here—*i.e.* the more the Kingdom ‘comes’ here—the more the Kingdom-that-is-to-come is being inaugurated which, when this mortal has put on immortality, shall be for ever. Conversely the coming of the Kingdom here, however partial and provisional, gives a reality to the Kingdom to come which otherwise has the elusiveness of a vision. The irradiation of Upper Tooting, in however slight a degree, with love and joy and peace, is an earnest of the glory of social happiness that shall be. A share in the one is the preparation for the other. Faithfulness in little and few things now

qualifies for rulership over many things in the future.

THE KINGDOM—OR CATASTROPHE

The bearing of our Lord's mind on all this is more than can be fully discussed here. I think it is evident that the intensity of His interest in individuals—"even in the least"—and the vehemence of His antagonism to the things which made "one of these little ones to stumble," were derived from His vision of life *sub specie aeternitatis*. He saw possibility and kingdom-qualities everywhere in the lives and ways of men as they went about their ordinary business, and He was ardent to release and use those qualities. It is quite true that He looked at the world as in catastrophe and crisis, but this was *because* He saw it as the sphere where the Father's will was to be accomplished ("on earth as it is in

heaven"), but where it was forgotten or obstructed. Through His faith in the Father He was in touch with a moral order, the laws of which could no more be violated and neglected than those of the physical. He shared with the prophets an insight into the tragedy which follows upon forgetfulness of the righteousness of God. He saw the inevitable ending which awaits human affairs when forgetful of the end for which they are meant. He saw in the vigilance, punctuality, business-like quality, honesty, and energy which men devoted to their own interests, the means whereby they were to co-operate in the onward movement of the Father's purpose. He saw that as they met that purpose with apathy and neglect, it must overtake them unawares and enforce its claims upon them through the dread lessons of convulsion and disaster. (We, who have been overtaken in our genera-

tion, should understand this.) He felt the pathos of what 'might have been' and the sadness of 'too late.' Yet He never despaired of this world, nor wavered in allegiance to that which was hidden in it from all other eyes. He set His face to do the work of co-operation with the Father and to bring in His Kingdom here. He went alone to do battle for His Name.

XVI

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE CHURCH TO THE WORLD—THE GOAL BEYOND AND THE LEAVEN WITHIN THIS WORLD

THE Church is in the world to embody the mind of her Lord. She is to be the means whereby, in the power of the Spirit, He extends over the whole world the Kingdom which was proved victorious in His Death and Resurrection. She is to be the means whereby the world knows its history, despite its tangled and halting confusion, to be the testing-place of purposes which have their culmination in the world to come, in the City of which the builder

and maker is God. She is to be the link between two worlds. She is to bring the eternal down to the temporal, and to present a final and heavenly goal to this world's strivings. She is to be the society of those who love the Lord Jesus and follow Him in His warfare, in the power of His resurrection and in fellowship with His sufferings. She is to be the leaven which never ceases to work at infusing human affairs with the glory of divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood.

Her life, therefore, has to be on two planes: one, the heavenly, whence her resources of love and power are derived; the other, the earthly, where those resources are applied. Her problem is neither to allow herself to be lost in a barren and unreal other-worldly occupation, nor to let herself be wholly absorbed in secular activities. I do not think the Church is meant to

Christianise the world by maintaining in all departments of life specifically Christian institutions (I would except schools). Rather the world is to be leavened from within itself, and is to have its own knowledge and gifts and power given an end and consecration. Christian principle and inspiration is to be diffused through it, not concentrated in it as it were in islands.

It is very important to lay stress on the diffusive or leavening character of the influence of Christianity upon the secular order. History affords many instances of the impossibility of binding the world within the limits of a cut-and-dried theocracy. The world and its sciences have rights and autonomies which the Church is bound to respect. Her function is to work through them and not to offer a substitute for them, else she will provoke inevitable reaction and emancipation—*pour être heureux il*

faut vivre loin des gens de l'église. It is, in truth, impossible to extract from the Gospel any ready-made and final scheme for the reformation of the world, or any Utopian pattern into which the world is to be strained. There is no Christian short-cut. The contribution of the Gospel to the slow and intricate process whereby the world learns to order and reform itself, is not anything else but a permanent, personal motive to constrain courage and perseverance, and a source and fellowship of moral power and of love. Christianity brings to bear upon the thick, dark, cold material of human affairs the power of light to penetrate and illuminate, the power of fire to irradiate and purify. It can only maintain its claim to primary importance by refraining from a claim to exclusive importance. It can only play its part by submitting to the patient disciplines whereby art and

science and politics achieve their results. To deny this is to imitate the folly of pious students who have thought to pass examinations in the power of prayer unmixed with work, or of good men who have attempted to overcome typhoid by a devotion inattentive to drains. Every department of life has its own science which has its own rights. The Christian statesman cannot cut any political knots by crying "Thus saith the Lord." He can only vindicate the counsel of the Spirit by producing in the council-chamber policies and arguments wiser, more massive, more thorough than those of any rivals.

Now if Christianity be an influence which works within the world and its method, and yet at a tension with them, it must have its own resources which are not of the world. If it is to wield power in the natural order, it must have a supernatural spring. Else

it may become so involved in secular processes as to become captured by them. Its salt may lose its savour. Its warfare may halt at a truce. What it needs is the perennial vigour of a twofold faith and love—Godward and manward. Hence the specific function of the Church is twofold: (*a*) worship, (*b*) fellowship.

(*a*) WORSHIP

Just because the kingdom (which the Church is not, but for which she is in the world) is to come in the secular sphere, the Church must call men away from the blinding dust and harassing fret of worldly business for renewal and refreshment with God. In the hard and disappointing warfare for the Kingdom in the world, it is easy to lose track of God and to lose heart about His cause. Therefore the Church

must call—"Come ye apart and rest awhile, for there are many coming and going. Come up hither and find again the heavenly vision. Come for new life and power. Come for forgiveness and renewal. Come, eat and drink of heavenly food. Come and meet your Lord and King. Come and gather round His Cross. Come and rejoice in His risen glory. Come and share in the fellowship of His Spirit. Come, beloved, to Him who is your lover. Come simply to be with Him. And then go out and ride with Him as He rides out to war. Go and find His cause in the world. Find Him in any one of His brethren, even in the least!"

(b) FELLOWSHIP

As the Church must call men to worship so that they may ever and again renew their relationship with

God, so she must call them into fellowship that they may be reinforced by and in the love of the brethren. Worship and fellowship are mutually necessary for the health of either. "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." And in every way the Christian warfare goes far beyond the wisdom and spiritual capacity of the mere individual. He must have the comradeship, witness, and love of others. The involved problems of what a Christian man should do, what he should enter, what he should shun, cannot be solved by solitary consciences. They require 'the mind of the Church'; while, on the other hand, the mind of the Church needs ever to be quickened from within itself by the protest, impatience, and vitality of individual consciences.

Every reason, indeed, which necessitates combination for any achievement

is operative here. The individual who seeks first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness will achieve little by himself against "principalities and powers," but only as one of many who are of one mind and heart and will. And such is the divine economy. No fellowship had nor has to be made. It is in existence as part of God's gift to the world in Christ. The Body of Christ is in the world, and very many are already in it. It is there to be turned to better use than heretofore.

XVII

TWO POINTS OF CHURCH REFORM

YET once again I reach a subject too great for adequate discussion. This time it is the question of Church reform. It occurs to the mind at once in the recollection of the distance which separates the Church as it is from the Church as it should be. I must be content with touching on two points: (a) the place of the clergy; (b) the problem of unity.

(a) THE PLACE OF THE CLERGY

I can see that the main course of my argument can be made to support a

motion for the abolition of the clergy. If Christianity is to find expression in terms of secular life, is it right that there should be an 'official religious' class set apart from secular life? But I think this line of argument, when thought out, carries with it the further motion (which I do not propose to discuss) for the abolition of the Church. It rests upon a forgetfulness that the whole Church is a priestly body, having within it diversified functions and priesthoods both of clergy and laity. The battle for the Kingdom cannot, any more than other battles, be fought by 'one arm of the service' alone, but by all together. The call to come apart for worship—itsself a necessity—necessarily involves the setting apart of men as priests, whose 'whole-time' ministry is that of the Word and Sacraments. Theirs is a humble office, for the posts of honour—the front line

—are out in the great world, in workshop and counting-house, on the battle-field of the Kingdom. They are to be *servi servorum*. Some men are wanted for this priesthood. But I do not think that all men in Orders should, as at present, do the same thing. It may be that in order to help maintain liaison between clergy and laity there should be deacons, deaconesses and priests out in the world, who earn their living in lay professions. They would know Christianity and its application in terms of the secular struggle. They would be able to speak in 'Kingdom-vernacular.' They would bring a special witness to Christ into the main stream of lay experience.

There is no doubt that, as things are in the Church of England, too much is left to the clergy, too much is claimed of them, too much depends on them. The Church has come to seem too

exclusively an institution for maintaining services. She has thus come to be too exclusively controlled by clerics. She has let means become ends. But if the end for which she has been sent into the world is the Kingdom of God—the leavening of all life with righteousness—then a far greater share in her counsels and management than falls at present must fall to those who are most closely involved in the struggle towards that end. The world is lay and secular. The battle in it cannot adequately be directed by men set apart in the priesthood, except with the co-operation of lay men and women in ordinary callings. Unquestionably the Gospel of the Kingdom carries with it an extension of democracy in the Church, and the recognition of a diversity of ministries and functions within the unity of the one Body.

(b) UNITY

Thus we come to the great question of Christian unity, though only to a local and partial instance of it. Only a very partisan and complacent member of the Church of England can be insensitive to her poverty in capacity to be a democratic and unclerical fellowship. This is due to many causes—partly to the unreality of her State connection. It is still more due to the draining out of her life of the divers gifts and functions of the Spirit which are to be found in the Non-conformist Churches. But indeed in regard to every element in the task of embodying the mind of her Lord, and of bringing in His Kingdom, the need of unity in the Church of Christ is pre-eminent. The world can never listen to a Christ who seems to be divided. It can never derive a new

power of fellowship and co-operation from a society at variance with itself. Yet it would make the last condition of things worse than the first to plaster the broken Body of Christ together merely for the sake of expediency and urgency, or by means of some mechanical unity. The Body of Christ has to recover the expression of its unity (the Body *is* one, though the expression of its unity is broken) through the realisation by its separated parts, in their struggle for the Kingdom, that they belong to one another. Many conditions, prevalent to-day, are forcing the pace in this direction. The circumstances which allowed differing Christians to be self-sufficient and independent of one another are rapidly passing away. Prominent among them was a fixed and literal certainty about the interpretation of Christianity itself. It was partly because Christianity be-

came so congealed into dogmatic and scriptural certainty that Christians were able to break away from one another with so little sense of betraying a common cause, with so little sense of mutual loss, and to live apart with so great indifference to others' fortunes. They did not need one another either for a better knowledge of God or for the fuller co-operation with Him in the bringing in of His Kingdom.

I would say nothing whatever to disparage the importance of authority and tradition in religion. But I am sure that their influence by themselves must wane, as the mind of the world expands and quickens under the influence of education. Men do not often, and will still less often, believe this or that merely because it is in the Bible, or because some ecclesiastical authority says so. Our Lord did not mean that they should. He committed

His Gospel to the witness of a living society. He did not leave it crystallised in a formula or in a book. The Gospel did nevertheless become so crystallised. It acquired a high degree of objective solidity and certainty. As such it came to obtain from men assent rather than conviction. It was possible, for instance, for many to assent to the fact that Christ rose from the dead, without any knowledge of Him as risen and present in the Spirit. This will seldom be the case in the future. Conviction about events in the past (a thing quite vital) will follow upon experience of spiritual presence and power in the present. Every one to-day is being increasingly thrown upon the test and verdict of experience. That means that they are being brought into dependence on one another. Men are helped to firm conviction by those who have first-hand knowledge and understanding of

spiritual reality, and whose witness in life is in harmony with their knowledge.

THE FALLACY OF SINKING
DIFFERENCES

This bears vitally on the question of Christian unity. If men are drawn together in a common need for deeper spiritual power and in a common struggle towards the same end, they find that they get mutual help through their *different* gifts and capacities. They realise together the existence of a spiritual Body which has many members, of which the different functions are complementary to each other.¹

¹ Cf. 1 Corinthians xii. 12 ff., "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. . . . For the body is not one member, but many. . . . There are many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you."

They see that they belong to one another, not out of a sense of duty, nor because of the advantage of united action, but because they *are* one in a unity which is organic. They are one *in* the Lord, who means His Body to be an organism with one Spirit expressed through diverse gifts and functions. This experience of unity is infinitely more hopeful than the coming together of members of different Christian bodies, on a basis of the sinking of differences and of agreement as to certain main verities. Such a unity was an attractive short cut in days which are now passing or have passed, when the ground of orthodox tradition was firm under foot—when the “Word of God” was a solid ‘rock’ on which men could stand. The great majority, I think, of the British nation are in favour of taking this cut to unity. It means falling back upon a main line of agree-

ment and the abandonment of differences. But real progress will not be by that way. The point of agreement lies ahead, not behind. It is Christ, up into whom men are to grow by way of different capacities and gifts which, when brought together, are found to be necessary to one another.¹ The moral here is, as it is everywhere, Go deep and go forward.

¹ Ephesians iv. 16, "From whom the whole body fitly joined together by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

XVIII

THE NEED OF THE WORLD FOR LEADERSHIP: "BEHOLD I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK"

I WOULD end where I began. As the war goes on and on, it is hard not to be apprehensive about the future. The world is piling up debt in every sense. If the debt is to be discharged, the world needs one thing—new powers of faith and hope and love.

The social experts, as they diagnose in advance the various 'situations after the war,' say as much in their own language and with great unanimity. Their reports amount to a chime of

such phrases as 'the need of a new spirit,' 'a new willingness to co-operate,' 'the subordination of private to public interest.' These are voices of those who are studying home questions. But similar cries fill the air from all the world over. In all this Christians should see unmistakable signs that "summer is nigh at hand." The symptoms of a world's need were to be the signs that the Kingdom draws near. The world calls for guidance, inspiration, and power. A terrific responsibility will rest on those who call themselves by the Name of Christ if through blindness to the signs of the times, if through partisan indocility, if through fearfulness, if through doubt of the living God, they do not attempt to answer the call.

THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY
REFORMATION

There is, I am convinced, no brand-new religion needed. There is no call to repudiate the stores of personal and corporate religion which have been harvested and inherited from the two great revivals of last century. What is required is a re-direction and setting in motion of those resources towards a new end—it is also the end for which Christ died. It means the swinging of religion outwards from self-preoccupation—individually from self-salvation, corporately from self-conservation—towards God and His will. It means asking—What does God want to do with the world and with the *life* of men?

There is, after all, something in the world to live, to suffer, to die for. Our eyes have been opened to it by war.

It is more than our own security and prosperity. It is something vital to the life of the whole world. Call it righteousness. It is always there waiting for champions. For God is always waiting for the co-operation of His children. His Kingdom is always ready to come nearer, could they but believe it. If the men among whom we chaplains have been—if men like them and women too—could believe it, then they are the men for it. They are approved champions of a cause. They have a great fund of human excellence to fling into something. If they offered it to God He would make the world over again. For what could He not do, for example, with the spirit in which the flying-boys go about their unheard-of work? What could He not do with the power, born of scientific knowledge, which is concentrated in war upon destruction? What if it

were fired by faith, liberated by forgiveness, empowered by love and devoted to construction? There is the raw material for the making of a new world ready to hand. It requires a Master Builder. Can we not all see that He stands at the door and knocks? "Amen : come, Lord Jesus !"

THE END

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE MIND OF THE
DISCIPLES

Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d. net.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGION
AT THE FRONT

Crown 8vo. 2s. net.

8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

FOUNDATIONS

A STATEMENT OF CHRISTIAN
BELIEF IN TERMS OF MODERN
THOUGHT

BY SEVEN OXFORD MEN :

B. H. STREETER, R. BROOK, W. H. MOBERLY,
R. G. PARSONS, A. E. J. RAWLINSON,
N. S. TALBOT, W. TEMPLE.

LONDON : MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD.

WORKS BY THE REV. W. TEMPLE

THE FAITH AND MODERN THOUGHT.

Crown 8vo. 3s. net. Globe 8vo. 2s. net.

THE NATURE OF PERSONALITY.

Crown 8vo. 3s. net.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Crown 8vo.

3s. net. Globe 8vo. 2s. net.

REPTON SCHOOL SERMONS: Studies
in the Religion of the Incarnation.

Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d. net.

**STUDIES IN THE SPIRIT AND TRUTH
OF CHRISTIANITY.** Crown 8vo.

4s. 6d. net.

CHURCH AND NATION. The Bishop
Paddock Lectures for 1914-15. Crown

8vo. 3s. net.

PLATO AND CHRISTIANITY. Three
Lectures. Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. net.

MENS CREATRIX. An Essay. 8vo.
7s. 6d. net.

ISSUES OF FAITH. A Course of Lectures.
Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d. net.

LONDON: MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD.

